

## Leadership training to fit the rating

**By Mark D. Faram**

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Sailors have suffered through multiple changes in leadership training over the last decade – and it's happening again.

But here's a bonus: two-week leadership classroom training will be required only when sailors have been selected for a leadership job.

That's because sailors will largely be responsible for teaching themselves about leadership, using computers and videotapes and attending seminars.

"Right now we spend a lot of time telling sailors how to be the perfect person, but in fact, we've never defined what that really is," said Capt. Chad Sain, head of Center for Naval Leadership in Little Creek, Va.

"What is the skill set that a work-center supervisor needs?" Sain said. "We've never defined that. We've just thrown the sailor in there saying, 'Well, you must know how to do it.'"

The training overhaul is an outgrowth of the "five-vector model," the new method the service uses to define what sailors need to know to advance in their ratings.

The new approach means leadership training paths will be customized for each rating and possibly for individual jobs.

"Those requirements will probably be different for a third class

boatswain's mate than a third class aviation electronics technician," Sain said. "The young boatswain's mate might have 20 sailors working for him where the your AT might be a low man in the shop."

Specialized classroom training will be required, for example, not only for third class petty officers becoming supervisors, but also for those moving into leading petty officer positions. Chiefs will be required to attend classroom courses when they become leading chiefs, as will master chiefs tabbed to be senior enlisted advisers. One goal is to define what it means to be a unit's top enlisted sailor.

"We've never sent a master chief to a program that discusses what it means to be a command master chief," Sain said.

Existing classroom training requirements will continue while Sain and his staff work to develop the new courses.

Sain's goal is to make the training something sailors take because they want to. "People should do it because it's valued," he said. "Command should send sailors to these classes because they know both the person and the organization will be better for it, rather than 'OK, now you can take the advancement exam.'"